WILLIAM BLAKE.

A NEW EDITION OF THE POEMS.

THE WORKS OF WILLIAM BLAKE, FOETIC, SYMBOLIC AND CRITICAL. Edited with Lithographs of the Illustrated "Prophette Books" and a Memoir and Interpretation by Edwin John Ellis and William Butler Yeats. In three volumes. Royal 8vo, pp. xvi., 420; vi., 435; ix., 174. London: Bernard Quaritch. 1893.

Dryden wrote before the investigations of modern science had been pursued into certain realms which even in our own day are but unwillingly opened to the adventures of materialistic analysts, and he stated what the seventcenth century was well prepared to receive when he uttered the familiar line, "Great wits are sure to madness near The world has moved since then. No one is prepared to deny that some great wits have been colored by madness-a port like Peddoes would furnish a case in point_but the unanswerable argument that insanity is hereditary while genius is not, ought to remove any doubt which may linger as to the separation of physiological and epiritual conditions. Febrile excitement may induce physical collapse, but it has yet to be proved that the frenzy of the lunatic has anything in common with the cestasy of the authentic poet. It would be beside the facts to assert that the editors of these three stout volumes have assumed the burden of such a proof, plausibly as the scoffer might say that they have, for it is now a tolerably sure conclusion that William Blake carried a sound mind in his extraordinarily sound body. It does not follow, however, that because Blake exercised lucid powers of reasoning in most of the relations of life he always wrote necessarily lucid verse, and it is not unfair to describe the editorial labors of Messrs. Ellis and Yeats as an effort to bring poetic order out of a chaos to which we hesitate to apply the epithet poetic. It is true that their criticism of the famous "Prophetic Books" deals chiefly with prophecy, aims at the elucidation of B'ake's mystic symbols, and would provide us with a prolegomena to a system of thought rather than with the signs whereby the expression of that system might be recognized as a great poetic creation. But it is true also that they regard the author of the "Visions of the Daughters of Albion" as a high priest of poetic as well as of prophetic mysteries. On neither side is it possible to accept their work without reserva-It would have been possible, perhaps, for the late Mr. Gilchrist, Blake's earlier and bestknown editor. He tried in vain to solve all his author's meanings, and if he failed it was not for lack of willingness to believe. It would have been possible also for Dante Rossetti, though he might have had some misgivings. Finally it would probably be possible, after some persuasion, for Rossetti's brother, who edited Blake for the "Aldine poets" and who is still living; and we the smallest doubt that Mr. Swinburne will dwell fondly on this imposing tribute to one whom he reveres. Fortunately these names, sig nificant as they are, have not yet been sufficient to fix Blake in the firmament by their influence, and it is permissible to speculate as to whether or not he is a star of any magnitude there without writing one's self down anathema maranatha.

The first of these volumes comprises a full and pictures the man's character besides tracing the events of his career; a short sketch of the literary work belonging to his carliest period; and resume, with explanatory charts, of his symbolic system. Volume second gives an interpretation of the poems, from the well known "Songs of Innoto the hitherto unpublished work entitled "Vala," which the editors regard as Blake's "literary masterplece"; a few chapters on the artistic characteristics of their poet, with his curious notes on Sir Joshna's "Discourses"; the descriptive catalogue prepared by Blake for the exhibition he held in 1809, and some few other documents. In the last and thickest volume the poems themselves are printed, the prophetic books being given in fair fac-similes of Blake's engraved plates, with the exception of the "Vala," of which nineteen pages are reproduced from the manuscript in the possession of the Linnell family, while the entire poem is printed after them in plain type, as are also the "Poetical Sketches" and the "Songs of The sum and substance of the memoir of Blake (an essay which is plainly impartial, for all that the writers are Blake enthusiasts of many years' standing) is that the poetinto this world only to live in another from the hours in which his intellect, or imagination, He was endowed with the gift of moving and having his being in the sphere of imagination: and throughout his lifetime and the controversies which have been waged about him the mystery surrounding him has been caused by his attempt to reconcile his spirit life (what he would have called his true life with the life in which he and his wife, Flaxman and Hayley, Crabb Robinson and Leigh Hunt, were very tangible facts. Some fugitive lines of Blake's express a thought which might have sprung from reminiscences of the prosaic, unimaginative and therefore anything but stimulating family circle into which he was born, s circle composed of an Irish Losier with his wife and children settled in London:

The Angel that presided o'er my birth Said, "Little creature formed for joy and mirth, Go! love without the help of anything on earth." Yet he was not to travel through life without sympathy. He married in his twenty-fifth year wife of whom on his death bed he made sketch dedicating it thus: "Kate, you have been an angel to me," and who herself became a vision-Even earlier he fell upon a powerful excit ant and inspiration in the writings of Swedenborg, for whom, rather strangely, his matter-of fact and uncultivated father had no dislike. On the contrary the present editors surmise that the elder Blake encouraged his family in the study of what was then a much less approved doctrine than it is to-day. Blake was apprenticed to Basire, the engraver, when he was fourteen, but up to that time had had no systematic instruction of any sort to speak of, spending his time in interminable country walks and reading what he chose. He chose Swedenborg and may have chosen Boehmen, the hardly less noted Lusatian mystic; and he found in them, there can be no question, abundant confirmation of his natural impulse toward a life of occult illumination. What turn Blake's mind might have taken had any of the Italian mystics fallen into his hands at this period is a question affording matter for quite futile and yet amusing reflection. blake under the spell of Joachim da Flora is a possibility which touches the fancy.
Yet he seems to have given evidence of the powers
of the seer long before Swedenborg or any other
With all their woods and streams and valleys
waited in dismal fear. sympathetic writer could have touched him. It a told that when "little more than a child" he was beaten by his mother for having declared that he had seen Ezekiel. As the years went on the "visitations" were frequent and tremendous. In 1800 he went to stay with Hayley, who had en ployed him to engrave plates for a publication of his own, and on the seashore, near which his cottage at Felpham was situated, he saw "majestic eight of men," the shadows of Moses and common height of men," the shadows of Moses and the prophets, of Homer, Dante and Milton. There the prophets, of Homer, Dante and Milton. There is a beautiful record of one of Blake's excursions into the world of imagination while at Felpham Days and nights of revolving joy,—Urthona was into the world of imagination while at Felpham which Messrs. Ellis and Yeats quote from Allan Cunningham. Blake asked a lady whom he met in society if she had ever seen a fairy's funeral. replied in the negative. Blake declared that he had witnessed the uncarthly pageant. "I was writing alone in my garden," he said; "there was great stillness among the branches and flowers. and more than common sweetness in the air; I rd a low and pleasant sound, and I knew not a flower move, and underneath I saw a procession

of creatures of the size and color of green and

Riske's imaginative utterance, and partly because

mind as the leaves of the entire work before us are turned. "In the philosophic or mystic system," they say, "Blake places fairies as the guardian powers or rather the visionary appearances or manifestations of the gentle and refined emotions of vegetative or instinctive life. This vision, like Granting that the fairies play a part in Blake's is granted that there can be no limitations for the system, into what intelligible terms is this particular vision to be translated? Precisely the same difficulty that meets us here meets us before the prophetic books, and, for that matter, before gerel and again and again unintelligible, and ac-

many of the lyrics. Blake did an immense amount of writing in his lifetime. He said to Crabb Robinson once: "1 have written more than Voltaire or Rousseau. Six or seven epic poems as long as Honer, and twenty tragedies as long as Macbeth." It would be in possible for any thinker with a definite scheme in his head and the power of preducing so muchwith its implication of fluency-to leave no formula, no plan of his ideal. The proof that Blake was a dreamer rather than a thinker lies in the failure of his prophetic books to yield such a plan -a plan, we hasten to add, which leads some where, offers some logical reason for being, has the unity of an organism. It is not necessary to suspect that the key may have been lost among the hundred or so volumes left by Blake and eventually destroyed by the Mr. Frederick Tat ham to whom they were confided by the poet's widow. Messrs. Ellis and Yeats claim to have wrested the secret meaning of Blake's fantastic allegeries from just those writings which have survived. And the secret is the subdivision of man's nature and the forces of the universe into innumerable elements deriving from a divine uni ty, and the representation of those elements in the symbolism of a peetic scheme. That scheme, ac cording to the editors, is an absolutely sound piece of imaginative construction. They say, paradoxically, that the two stumbling stones in the path of the crities have been "the solidity of the myth and its wonderful coherence." The trees have been invisible because of the ferest. Yet it is manifest that Blake had none of the characterities of the poet from whom, a myth of solidity of wonderful coherence, might be expected. Though commentators may be hard put to it to make the 'Faradisio' or the "Convito" wholly clear, it is nevertheless the note of Dante's genius that it subdues the stuff it works in, and that the mare of his verse is governed by firmly-grasped philosophical ideas. With him as with Milton or Goethe the architectural faculty is highly developed and perpetually active. In Blake it is dormant if. indeed, it exists at all. Something like an a knowledgement of this comes from Messrs. Ellis and Yeats in the following passage which occurs

in the memoir: "Blake's visions, coming to him at uncertain intervals . . . suggested a vast symbolic myth to him . . . telling by fits and starts a narrative whos apparent incoherence veils a unity of significance

. . It would have been practically impossible and is, at any rate, practically incredible, that this should have been the result of deliberate con We have many scraps of Blake's writings and many of his books overlap each other in their exposition of the great story, but of building up by ingenuity, of elaborating from a plot, or exceedingly interesting memoir of Blake which expanding from a sketch, there is no sign reconciliation of infinite disorder with unity, and especially in a poetic mythus, is not easy to perceive. The incoherence of Blake's narrative is more than apparent even in the dim, religious light of the patient interpretation offer d in thes The light does not dissipate the obscurities of the prophetic books; and the latter are no nearer to equalling the sanity of a natural balance, however hypothetical it may be, of Swed nborg's daring explanation of the universe.

Blake's great deficiency, his inability to preerve form from all the insidious attacks of his rapt imagination, is detected more frequently in his elaborated, labyrinthian works than in shorter hights of his muse. That some of these flights are into the pure aether of song' If incontestable. There are verses of his like "London," with its marvellous movement and its thrilling accent of sympathy: like the so familiar "Tiger tiger, burning bright," like the whimsical stanzas on "Cupid," and like the exquisite songs "I love the jocund dance," and "Memory, hither come, into which there has passed a strain of feeling a musical as it is tender. Falling short of the belllike fullness of tone and supremely well-modulated or been killed out of the country. It had to be melody of the early Efiglish poets, there is yet the gan to expand, up to the day of his lyric charm which he sometimes shares with them possibilities.

Never seek to tell thy love, Love that never told can be: For the gentle wind doth move Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love, I told her all my heart, Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears, Ah: she did depart!

A traveller came by, Silently, invisibly: He took her with a sigh

And there is a haunting cadence heightening the fine poetic figure of this fragment from the ad

O winter! bar thine adamantine doors: The north is thine: there hast thou built thy dark Deep-founded habitation.

There you have Blake, the natural poet, speak ing with a voice unmuffled by confusing echoes caught from the discord of phantasmal spheres It is no intellectual lassitude which guides the reader to poetry like this in Blake, and cause him to pass with indifference the awful penumbra of the prophetic books, any more than it is a shallow mind which, in choosing between "Sordello and the sorgs in "Pippa," turns unbesitatingly to the latter. It is the inevitable gravitation of taste to poetry pure and simple as distinguished from poetry that justifies its existence, if at all by the p s ession of qualities not inherently poetic Extra-poetical virtues are powerless in thems-lveto arrest the decay of work disfigured by poetivices or suspended in the colorless limbo of vers neither vicious nor good. To the book of "Vala the editors of Biake refer us as to his "literary masterpiece." It contains 849 lines, from which the first thirteen thay be selected as giving a fair measure of the character of the rest.

The song of the aged mother which shook the heavens with wrath, Hearing the march of the long-resonnding, long-heroic verse Marshailed in order for the day of Intellectual

Four Mighty Ones are in every Man. A perfect Unity
Cannot exist but from the Universal brotherhood
of Eden,
The Universal Man, to whom be glory, evermore:

Amen,
Which on the nature of the Lamb's creation the
Lamb's Father only,
No Individual knoweth, nor can know in all Eter-

Los was the fourth immortal starry one, and in

his name.

The beauty of this verse is not obvious. Not is it obvious that we have apprehended "a school of blank verse more poetic and bardie, while not less dramatic, than the Elizabethan"-the jadg ment of Messrs. Ellis and Yeats-in the fragment entitled "King Edward the Third," from Wilel our last quotation shall be taken, the speech of Clarence to the Pishop at the English Court.

O my good Lord, true wisdom drops like honey From off your tongue, as from a worshipped oal Forgive, my Lords, my talkative youth, the

of creatures of the size and color of green and gray grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a roseleaf, which they buried with songs and then disappeared. It was a faffy funeral." This is a serviceable quotation to make, partly because it illustrates one of the most delicate phases of libustrates one of the most delicate phase libustrates one of the

This, then, is to be elevated above the rich

of his greatest successor! How far the reader of Messrs. Ellis and Yeats's work-a labor of love if ever there was one-will be willing to go with them in their estimate of Blake's genius must depend not so much upon an acceptance of their interpretation of the poems as upon the attitude all the rest, was symbolic." Symbolic of what? held toward the responsibilities of genius. If it inspired poet and artist, that he can creet an arbitrary standard of workmanship, produce writ ing that is sometimes poetry and sometimes dogcompany it by pictures, sometimes noble and sometimes grotesque, and hardly ever answering to the canons of good art-if he can do all this, and, for the sake of a thought of which the value is not easily to be ascertained, be left unquestioned in his niche, then to the applause of Messrs. Ellis and Yeats more will be added. If, on the other hand, the first thing to be asked of a poet is tha his poetry be rhythmic, well balanced and lucid, and of an artist that his art be shorn of eccentricities and, above all things, beautiful, then this work will leave Blake where it finds him in the mind of the unbiased student, an interesting mental phenomenon, at times a peet and at times an artist, but not either the one or the other uniformly, and never the peer of the truly greatestbecause most roundly perfected-artists and poets.

EARLY ENGLISH LITERATURE.

STOPFORD BROOKE'S NEW BOOK.

THE HISTORY OF EAGLY ENGLISH LITERATURE:
Being the History of English Poetry from Its Heginthigs to the Ascension of King Affred, By
storfert A. Brooke. 12mo, pp. 509. Macmillan
& Co.

The author of this handsome volume has made welcome and important contribution to that erics of books about the beginnings of English literature which modern research has so multiplied during the last generation. For a time the scholarship of Germany took the lead in this direction, and it has accumulated a mass of in formation of the most extensive and invaluable character, though not always commended to popular study by grace of form. But many years have now passed since English scholars took up a task which was their natural birthright, and they also have erected not a few noble monu ments to the early times of English literature One great difficulty in all such work as the pres ent writer has undertaken is the necessity of translating the early English poetry which is to be cited. Mr. Brooke has, as he frankly states in his preface, felt this difficulty, but he has en deavored to meet it in perhaps the only way pos sible-namely, by preserving the meaning of the original closely, and by striving to represent the cadence as nearly as may be.

It might be going too far to say that he has altogether succeeded in this; but it is certainly not too much to say that he has done what many carlier writers have signally failed in-namely in putting before his readers the old English poetry in the form of living verse, which does measurably reflect the rhythm and the movement of the original. This, indeed, is the most important of all considerations, for what is first desired is to understand what these early poets sang, and how they sang it. It is possib this history to follow the development of the English poetic art intelligently and with sympathy; to perceive the nature of the influence which moulded it; to trace the bearing upon i of those changes and cataelysus which the muses altogether in those British Isles, and to replange the land into intellectual darkness.

Mr. Brooke has treated his prolific subject with great care and fulness, and has, so far as can be perceived, omitted no source of information. His history is a compact yet not in any seus; abridge account of growths and changes which took many enturies for their accomplishment. But English poetry in those early years was a sparse and seat tered growth and beset with hostile environment In the North and in the South, moreover, it grew under wholly different conditions. The southern branch never took strong root, being too alien in character, and presently it died of inanition. The northern branch flourished for a time, but was cut down and destroyed by the inroads of the Danes generations which immediately preceded the advent of Alfred poetry had very literally died reborn in due course with the coming of better

ments that Mr. Brooke treats. Some of the firs neetry which we now find it convenient to call English, really was not projuced in England at all Much of it was purely Latin. Those who employed the vernacular, either then or at a much later period, were comparatively few. Even at the time of Chaucer it seemed dubious whether the native literature could flourish, into such disrepute had the English tongue fallen among the unsympathetic foreigners who ruled the But not less interesting than this struggle for what may be termed the founding of English literature is the history of the influences which were to mould it, and the author has devoted everal deeply significant chapters to these questions. The introduction of Christianity was per haps the most important of these influences, and it was the more so because the absence of perseution and coercion permitted the best imaginative materials of Paganism to pass over and be mergein the new faith. The people became converts to the latter through persuasion alone. For more than the space of two generations the conflicting refigions confronted one another on the same ground. The heathen temples and the Christian church co-existed all that time, and the change from Paganism was gradual and wholly voluntary

Another deeply interesting question is the ef feet of the cult of the Virgin Mary upon that nascent civilization. There can be no doubt that in those dark ages it proved of priceless value to the cause of civilization. The Teutonic na tions, indeed, had never degraded nor embrated their women, and they were open in special ways to the reception of the Gospel aspect of woman. But nothing less than Christianity could have lifted woman to the social rank she was destined to occupy in the Western world; and it may perhaps be said that only the strong Teutonic influence could have counteracted that Gallic disposition which was at the core very far away from the feeling which, in the fulness of time, was to become Chivalry. To the Church, then, in England, during those early centuries, must be ascribed this important gain for civili zation; and the female monasteries had a good deal to do with the success of the whole

The cult of the Virgin had, no doubt, the greater acceptance because the creeds which had preceded it in the land, coming from the cold North, were mainly personifications of the reign of the elements and the fierce savagery of the sea-rovers who embraced them. There was no comfort in their beliefs, which were gloomy and hard and repellant, and the warmth and the tenderness which marked Christianity, especially in its relations to woman, appealed strongly to minds weary of the perpetual contact with the elements and with fierce foes of their own kind. The English themselves longed for rest and for refreshment. They did not find it in the Norse mythology, but they discovered it in the new faith, and to the latter they naturally turned. Changes there were to be, for the worse as well as for the better. The emancipation and elevation of woman in Britain was not, indeed, to prove an easy or a rapid conquest. More than a thousand years were to elapse before any positive change for the better was to become apparent. And yet there is no room to doubt that before the time of Alfred, in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, the slow introduction of Christianity exercised very salutary effects upon the general situation.

Mr. Brooke has dealt very clearly and well with the salient points of his somewhat tangled history. Everything is made subsidiary to main subject, which is the geresis and the development of English Literature. The book happened so quickly that the chief participents found is written in a clear and often captivating style; themselves looking bewilderedly at one another ever

it is thoroughly soler and moderate in all its claims and estimates, and it deserves to be considered as a thoroughly scholarly, conscientious and valuable work. It is to be hoped that Mr. Brooke may be enabled to carry it forward to the age of Elizabeth, in accordance with his

TWO AMERICAN DRAMAS.

WORKS BY MISS RIVES AND MISS WILKINS.

ATHELWOLD. By Amelie Rives. 16mo, pp. 118 Harper & Brothers. GILES COREY, YEOMAN. A Play. By Mary E. Willette Illustrated. Duodecimo, pp. 108 Wilkins. Illustrated. Harper & Brothers.

Amelie Rives has chosen for her subject an old story in early English history, and one which lends itself thoroughly to literary and dramatic purposes. It is the story of a king who, hearing of the beauty of a girl in his kingdom, sends one of his nobles to see and to report upon the damsel. But the noble himself straightway falls in love with the beauty, forgets his fealty to his lord, marries his charmed out of hand, and then finds it necessary to lie to the king, whose suspicions, however, are roused and who insists upon paying a visit to the castle of his treacherous Thane. The latter tries to avoid discovery even at this crisis by persuading his young wife to disguise herself and to stain her face. king comes, and the hostess, instead of obeying he husband, is led by her vanity to array herself in her richest robes and to put on all her jewels, revealing herself thus to the king in all her transcendent love liness. The deceived monarch is furious and a bitter quarrel ensues between him and Athelwold, ending in combat in which Athelwold is slain. The tragedy is ied up to and engineered by the evil-minde priest, Oswald, who has acted in conjunction with the king's favorite, Elfreda, in his plot against Athel-Oswald, in the final scene, is himself stable by Athelwold's trusty page, and is left dying.

This is a bare outline of a drama which from Literary point of view deserves very high praise tenth century, that is to say-the question of languag has but the remotest significance. It is very wel-known by all who have followed the laborious and prolonged researches of Mr. Ellis and his band of fellow-workers that we neither know, nor are likely e know, much of the language which was used in England as far back as the tenth century. What we do know, however, is that it was not anything like English as the world has come to understand English, and that it was as far removed from the tongue of Chaucer and Spenser and Shakespenre a from our own. This being the case, the writer wh seeks to reproduce events of that period need not be concerned about exactness. In the present instance the author has employed a certain number of locu tions which may be supposed to produce the effect of archaism, but which are really merely fancial and have no bearing whatever upon the talk of the period. But they are not without their use, and they o serve to lend a certain emphasis and a certain quaintness to the situation.

In regard to the dramatic effectiveness of the play, o thoughts of archaism have for a moment misle the author. She has sought instinctively the mos vigorous presentation of the story, and she has em ployed a language which serves this purpose mirably. From beginning to end the render will be impressed by the vigor, compactness, felicity and aptoubtless a spice of mischief in her, as what beautiful and much courted girl has not. But it is made quit clear that even to the last, when she commits her atal mistake, she is loyal to her husband. The char acter of the latter is well and strongly drawn. aneasy conscience is seen to be disturbing him more end more as time passes. He cannot face and sovereign as of old. He is full of self-reproach and with it naturally springs on unworthy doubt f a court's splender, and who cannot 'ut know that oyal, yet Athelwold is afraid to trust her, and hi ack of confidence it is which eventually precipitat tion is worked out with unquestionable skill and There is no decline in the interest of the drama. The scenes between the girl and her mars the same time reinforce the general impression of her loyalty. The scenes between the king's favorite. Elfreda, and the priest, Oswald, are never sema tional, yet are full of a sinister meaning. The character of Oswald is not carefully blocked out, but hi evil nature is made thoroughly apparent and he i seld up to the odium of the spectator entirely brough his own speech and action. a time character, full of notice traits, but to finds it possible to misrepresent his lave to the king, to declare that common report has given her beautlethe does not possess, to pretend that his desire to her bimself is merely greed for her posking might suspect nothing; and when he is at last exposed, and no recourse is left him, he become desperate and would kill the king, who may become h's rival. All through the drama the sense of destiny impelling the unbappy man is strong, cannot fight against it. The fatal endowment of supernal feminine beauty breaks down all his erves and destroys all his healthy reselves. He be comes a falsifier and then a traitor, and he dies in the midst of his misery.

There is, indeed, an almost masculine breadth and armness in the general construction. We do not think that the author has succeeded very well in her songs, which are light enough, but for the most par pointless. There was a time in Eaglish playwriting when very poor dramas were commonly enriched by very good songs, but we are not to expect too much in these degenerate days. Taking her work as whole, we think Amelie Rives has done exceedingly well. It really is a good play, and it will bear these degenerate days. Taking her work as interest, and serve to carry forward the plot and t strengthen the general sligation. The scatiment con veyed is frequently elevated and beautiful. The tion is nervous and pregnant. The action is in no instance overstrained or in any manner unnatural There is an evenness, and a sustained evenness, in the whole work which enhances its effect, and wher the end arrives we feel that nothing mean or ignoble or absurd has been suffered to interfere with the

The story of Giles Corey and his wife Martin Is one of the familiar landmarks of an age which in nearly every respect seems strange and incompre it that so short a time ago comparatively the people of those colonies were delivered over to a strange delivion which had already overrun all Europe and which had even then nearly died of natural exhaus-tion? Fflorts to interpret the Salem witcheraf mania have been made repeatedly-nay, it is not now for the first time that the strange old tragedy of the Coreys is dramatized. The work has been attempted before, and more than once, but there is a fascination that direction. It has to be said that she has dor such a work is the principal thing to consider, and thus regarded, there will be found little room for faultfinding in her play. History, of course, has been followed as closely as possible, but the material ha been worked up very effectively. Perhaps the figure of the child Phoebe and the malleious old nurse arof the child riness and the materials on harse are fectitious, but they only serve to vivify the general impression and to show how the atmosphere at the time was saturated with suspicion and superstition, and how anything and everything tended to increase the popular and, above all, the priestly credulity. Giles Corey, who refused to plead and was condemned "in contumaciam" to the dreadful death by pressure, is naturally, and without any aid from literary art, a figure that must live forever through its own merits. But Miss Willains has done him full justice and represented him, as no doubt hi was, the strong, rough, loyal man, who laughed at hi wife's plety even while admiring it, and who when he realized that his idle words had helped to send her to her grave, vowed that he would never speak again and kept that oath even unto death.

The whole situation is full of the most powerful

elements of emotion, and in this little drama they are employed not less quietly than effectively. It was unreason of the whole witcheraft delusion. Even at the time, the Salem epidemic was strang-ly belated, for the rest of the world had got well over its witchburning, hanging and drowning attacks, and slowly and surely coming to itself. But in i But In those Mussichusetts plantations, in the scattered forest clearings, on the rockbound, inchement coast, amid an Indian-haunted country, the old superstitions were strangely quick to flame up, and the relatirected

the graves of their innocent victims almost before they realized what had happened. Of course it was not the less, but all the more, humble because of this frenzy of cruelty and credulity and folly. to be lived out somehow, and there was no way but the old way. The tragedy of the Coreys put a period to the murders which under cover of law had threatened to spread far and wide; and it also brought the people to reflect upon the preposterous character of the evidence which was held sufficient to take human life upon. Whoever now deals with the Corey episode must bear all this in mind, and represent the facts clearly; and this is what Miss Wilkins has done in her clever composition. It is of course a wretched story to rehearse, but the records of poor human nature unfortunately are full of events quite as miserable, and if we desire to be armed against a recurrence of many evils we must not only know remember what has happened in the past. In this instance the tragedy, homely as it is in nearly all respects, is so powerfully presented that it hold upon the reader; all the stronger, indeed, because the reader is fully aware that imagina tion has no part in the narrative. Miss Wilkins has been quite successful in her presentation of the historic facts, and her play deserves a warm encomium.

LITERARY NOTES.

Charles Sumner is described by Mr. Sala as entreating Thackeray at dianer one day to write a answer of the novelist to these arguments was Dickens wrote a book about America, and your people didn't like it." Mr. Sumner, however, was not satisfied and continued his protestations that the American people wanted an American book from Thackeray, and that they had had nothing except the as it contained a portrait of George Washington which they thought was somewhat lacking in reverence to the Father of his Country. Very diplomatically Thackeray changed the subject by calling for critical opinions on three different kinds of cognac, tecanters of which were served with the coffee.

The new life of De Foe, which is in preparation by Mr. Wright, will contain much new and valuable biographical detail derived from unpublished letters of De Foe. Mr. Wright thinks he has discovered the key to "Robinson Crusoe," and he will endeavor in his work to prove that De Foe, in declaring, in the Serious Reflections," that he was himself "Robinson Crusoe," was, contrary to the opinion of most of his biographers, asserting what was in reality quite true.

"Many Intentions," Mr. Kipling's new book, now on the Appleton press, will contain various stories which have already appeared in periodicals; but it will also contain divers entirely new ones never before

Only 150 copies of the large-paper edition of W. H. Mallock's "Verses" will be published. Some of the number will be sent over here. The price per copy in London is twenty-one shillings. Flammarion, the astronomer, has been writing for

The Cosmopolitan" a story which begins in the April number and is a curious mixture of exciting sensaton and scientific theory. It is called "Omega: The End of the World"-a title which indicates sufficiently its unusual character. The oldest piece of leather binding known is said to be that of St. Cuthbert's Gospel, now in the

the frontispiece of an important work on bookbinding which Messrs, Lawrence & Bullen have in the press. "The Art of Taking a Wife," by the Italian scientist, Signer Mantegazza, will soon be published

by Appleton.

Mr. Robert Blum, the artist, has made a number of charming sketches which will accompany the articles on his artistic impressions of Japan prepared for

It is supposed that Paul Bourget will fall heir to the empty scat of Teine in the French Academy. M. Bourget has been regarded as Taine's favorite pupil or disciple. M. Zola, of course, intends to make vizorous efforts to secure the seat. Concerning the dead author, Zoia says: "I consider Taine to have been he of the best writers and greatest intellects of the There are three authors who have exerched a great influence over me; they are Musset, Flaubert, and Taine. Whatever method I may posess, I owe to this list. I have applied to the novel the ideas which he followed in his scientific and his-

"Did you know him personally!" I asked, "Yes, I first met him when I was at Hachette's in 1865. He used to come down to the office of an afternoon, he did his best to dissunde me from the project, advising me to become a tutor, and even offering to pro-cure me some papels. I refused, as I felt drawn to-ward journalism, and did not understand tis repugserview, and did not see him again till we met at Flaubert's house, seven or eight years later. A misnderstanding connected with literary matters sprang up between us, and it lasted till the day of his death. Taine never voted for me at the Academy. It would e strange if I obtained his seat, but I do not intend to offer myself if Paul Bourget comes forward, as I think he is in some degree entitled to Taine's fauteuil."

Mrs. Oliphant has written a political story which is to appear as a serial in an English periodical,

Mrs. Bayard Taylor has revised her husband's "Hispublished by Appleton.

A fac simile edition in colors of William Blake's "Songs of Innocence and Experience" is to be brought out by Mr. Quaritch. It is to be colored by hand after the famous Hamilton Palace copy.

"The Saturday Review," which is not wont to extol American writers, says of Professor Fisher's "Colonial Era": "Dr. Fisher's book is a capital introductory work for young students. It is well knit readable, erlightened in spirit and sound in method. We could wish to see the whole series of volumes done by the same hand." Of the same book "The London Spectator" says: "Method, lucidity and fairness are the characteristics of this work, which, though not ostensibly a school text-book, would serve admirably for the instruction of advanced boys of an inquiring turn, more especially if, happily, they have

Wilkie Collins's method of composition, as recently described by his publisher, was this: First he drafted a synopsis of a novel; then he filled it out; then he finally went over the manuscript to make alterations the copy typewritten for the printers. He had much trouble in finding titles for his stories.

W. Clark Russell's forthcoming novel is entitled "The Trugedy of Ida Noble."

SAYINGS OF CHILDREN.

These youthful utterances are sent to The Tribun by a New-England contributor:
Baby had been playing with a big aster-blo

and the floor was strewn with the purple petals. six year the Ted-the punster of the family-stood regarding the ruin, with his hands behind him and a wise countenance. "Hoh!" he said, "I don't call that an aster. That's a dis-aster."

Roy's little brother is several years his senior and much admired by the little fellow. He imitates him on all possible occasions, counting it his highest pleasure to "do like Willis." heard his brother singing "I am so giad that Jesus loves me—even me." Straightway the little imitator struck up his own tune, making rather a startling application—"I am so glad that Jesus loves Willis—eyen Willis."

ever trotted about the house with ruin in his wake. The whole family is kept on the alert to protect the household lares and penates. A day or two ago El-sie's mother flott up the paper and commenced upon manima answered; "Way, somebody that takes what doesn't belong to him, dear-see;"
"Oh, yes," the little lady answered, nodding her head wisely, "I see—and Dicky's a burg-er-lar,

A Unitarian minister's little son had long set bis small heart upon owning a bleycle. His papa told him to ask God for one, which the little supplicant proceeded to do with much zeal and faith. Thet night lis papa and mamma bought the coveted machine and placed it close beside the little fellow's crib chine and placed it close beside the fittle fellow's crib.

Next morning they listened at the door to hear what
freir son and heir would say. The blue eyes opened
and became instantly aware of the bleyele. Out of
bed lopped the boy, exclaiming ruefully, "licol
gracious, God! don't you know the difference between a bleyele and a tricycle?"

EXHIBITIONS AND OTHER TOPICS. CURRENT HAPPENINGS - A COLLECTION OF ORIENTAL RUGS-BOSTON'S WISE EXPERI-MENT IN MATTERS ARCHITECTURAL PRENCH SCULPTURE IN CHICAGO. Two new exhibitions come up for discussion this week. On Tuesday there will be a press view of Mr. Samuel Colman's pictures and the curios which he has collected abroad. His ceramics are expected to prove of particular value. The Academy does not

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open to the public until a week from to-morrow, but the press will be admitted to the galleries on the afternoon of varnishing day, next Thursday. next Saturday night. The attendance has been good, showing an increase as the days have passed. During the present week it is much to be hoped that the galleries will be generously patronized. There deserve to be now if ever for the collection is one of remarkable interest and is not likely to be comalled here very soon. There will be music at the exhibition every evening this week. After the doors are closed on Saturday night preparations will be begun for the which a press view will be given on April 12, and to which the public will be admitted two days later. ook recording his experiences of transatiantic travel It is said that the contributions of New-York artists book recording his experiences of transaction to the Chicago Fair will not be missed at the ex-and his opinions of the American people. The only and his opinions of the American people. The only answer of the novelist to these arguments was their resources the members of that organization expect to make as brilliant a show here as though their energies had not been in the least diverted by the doings in the West. The "Rembrandt de Perq was not withdrawn from the American Art Galleries Thackeray, and that they had had homaig to have a shown there up to last Mon-Virginians," which they rather resented, inasmuch with the other works shown there up to last Mon-day night. It remains on view until next Saturday, It is worth while recurring to the Parsons exhibition for a moment. When it had been closed it was found that no less than fifty-six of the ninety-three pictures had been sold since the opening day, the It shows conclusively that there is an appreciative public in New-York and that when a really good new thing is offered it is not offered in valuamiable Englishman, with his primitive ideas of what goes on outside its immediate line of vision surprised when he visits Mr. Parsons's exhibition in Lordon and finds that only about a third of the collection has been left for him to purchase. There may not be as much as that, for Mr. Parsons has taken his pictures to Boston and it is not probable that none will be bought there. The collection of 1.023 Oriental rugs which has been

placed on exhibition at the American Art Galleries by an importer whose name Is withheld is lik: the Ventine-Raymond collection of Eastern textiles dis persed only the other day, in that It is of a character raised above the mediocre level of commerce, but it is unlike it in being mised vastly higher. The present gathering, not being of objects acquired purely for pleasure, embraces, as a matter of course, scores-nay, hundreds-of rugs whose best recom mendation is simply that they are good products of good looms, fine but not unique specimens. But in it there are some pieces which are decidedly unique One of these, No. 1,000, is so because it is extraordinarily rare; it is of Arabic workmanship and eleven hundred years old. The others are unique as enything of matchless beauty is unique whether an possession of the authorities of Stonyhurst College, outh wall of the large gallery on the second floor, as England. A reproduction of this treasure will form superb an array of old Iran silk rugs as the most fastid ious amateur could desire. The silk rug must always have a lighter pile than fabrics of woollen threads, and for this reason might appear to be a little less luxurious, but it can have what rugs of ng other stuff can have-a surface of the utmost brilliancy and isidescence. There is probably nothing in the world short of the sen in sunlight, nothing of man's manufacture, save the glass of antiquity, which hewitches the eye with such magte of color as is woven into rugs like No. 1,005, a royal rug seven by eight feet and the gem of the collection; like Nos. 2-3, 800, 991 and 1,001, all rugs of Iran, or like No. 934, an old Tebrizian example. Much has been said in praise of Eastern textile workers, ancient and modern, when their treatment of geometric ornament has been described as the only treatment which quite eliminates whatever inflexibility might threaten to survive therein, and to the connoisseur learned in the lore of the East there is inexhaustible suggestion in the language of the designers. From a note in the catalogue on one of the Khorassan ruzs in this collection, the visitor may learn whence the loop, better known as a palm leaf, which figures in Cashmere shawls and Persian rugs, was derived. But the greatest glory of the rugmakers of the Orient is that they were and are still natural colorists, that they control the subtlest lines with a power no less extraordinary in their sphere than is the power of the Venetian painters in theirs. Everywhere in the collection at the American Art Galleries there is color of peculiar We will make no pretence of giving & which we have alluded, and those in their department, which requires to be specially pointed out. The great mass of textiles represents some of the most excellent art of Persia. No more need be said. sale of the rugs begins next Tuesday afternoon and Boston has made a significant stride forward,

establishing a deeply interesting precedent. In Copley Square the city possesses one of the finest open spaces in the country. It is disfigured, to be sure, by the Museum of Fine Arts on one side and by the New Old South Church on another, both ugly buildings. but it has, to counterbalance these, two of the best works of architecture we have, Richardson's Triulty Church and the magnificent Public Library recently erected from the designs of a New-York firm of architects, and it has not yet been spilled by any one of the bad statues with which Boston, like every other American city of Importance, is plentifully supplied. In the hope of forestalling the vandal and creating a public feeling before which the pernicious influence of a misguided government would be compelled to vanish away, the Boston Society of Architects has thrown open a competition for designs looking to the "remodelling and embelishment" of the square. The terms of the competition and a re-production of the outline bird's eye view of the square prepared by the society appear in "The American Architect and Building News" for March 4.

Architect and Building News" for March 4. We quote the foll wing from the advertisement:

The society has determined to invite all persons professionally interested in the solution of such a problem as is here presented—whether architects—employs, engineers or landscape architects—to such in designs in accordance with the foll wing pergramme; it being understood that this step is taken by the society of its own motion, and without authority from any efficial source; and that has step is taken by the society of its own motion, and without authority from any efficial source; and that has step is taken by the conjections that their designs will ever be considered by the city government, with whom alone rests the power to carry any design into execution. . . Each design must include some monumental feature in the centre of the square, of whatever character the author may determine, and consideration of a new disposition of the tracks of the surface railways. . . The society offers five price of \$50 each for the five designs which shall be adjusted to be the best, by a jury of experts to be appointed by the cumulties.

Further particulars in regard to the conspection, which closes on April 3, may be obtained by address.

which closes on April 3, may be obtained by address ing H. Langford Warren, secretary, 9 Parkest., Boo ton. Enough is given from the society's announcement to fully explain its object and the way in which it going to work to achieve it. It is an enterprise which strongly commends itself to New-York. Our only re-gret is that the idea did not originate with the Archtectural League, but, though that organization must forego the pride of taking the initiative, it cannot afford to neglect the example set by the Boston ar chitects. Its duty toward City Hall Square of any government in the future is obvious.

other public place which may be menaced by the day government in the future is obvious.

From Chicago, by way of Paris, comes news as delightful as that from Boston given above. The section devoted to sculpture in the French exhibit at the Fair is expected to be exceptionally striking, and one reason for this is that the directors of the Chicago Art Institute have commissioned in Paris casts of a number of the most noted modern French sculptures. These casts will be shown at the Esposition, and when the latter is closed will be stip in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute. Of the interest they will see up in the Art Institute, and d'Arc.," by Chappi. "Akhinoceros Altaque par def Arc.," by Cain; "Les Bourgeois de Calais," by Rodin; "Dianc," by Faiguiner, "Dethieres Funerailles and "Mozart Enfant," by Barrias; "Quand Memeis and "Gloria Vietis," by Mercie; four figures from the moument to Lamoriclere, by Dubois, "Ke miss in this list such names as Dajon, Delaplanche, Aube and Saint Marcsana, and we would be glad to bubois had been ordered by the Institute, some of Dubois had been ordered by the Institute, some of Dubois had been ordered by the Institute, some of the former's masterly portraits and the beautiful former's masterly portraits a